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SCHOOL OF MARINE AFFAIRS

VADM Conrad C. Lautenbacher  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Room 6811  
14<sup>th</sup> St & Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20230

March 4, 2008

Dear VADM Conrad C. Lautenbacher:

I would like to transmit for your consideration the NOAA Science Advisory Board's (SAB) approved report from its Climate Working Group (CWG) on its Review of the Climate Observations and Analysis Program (COA). The CWG undertook its review during the period April 11-13, 2007 and reported to the NOAA SAB in August.

I highlight some aspects of the report in the following paragraph. The overall results of the review give NOAA high marks for its Climate Observations and Analysis Program. Still there are some concerns that warrant your continued attention. The CWG identifies several overarching strategic issues that affect the management of the COA Program and the NOAA Climate Goal in general. These strategic issues include the need for a shared vision that: (i) provides a coherent, integrated structure for COA activities and services; (ii) improves the functioning of the NOAA internal process that integrates program planning, budget formulation and execution, and processes used to determine priorities when requested and appropriated budgets differ; (iii) advances the approach to engaging partners from the external communities in COA and Climate efforts; and (iv) furthers the integration of the many efforts under COA with one another and under the Climate Goal. The CWG supports the efforts you, VADM Lautenbacher, are making to realize a National Climate Service as this will address many of the above mentioned concerns.

To fully accomplish the Climate goal, COA should establish a Strategic Plan. The CWG suggests ways to implement this recommendation. Despite efforts to work across NOAA, the COA still is impeded by the need to improve the PPBES process as well as coordination of programs, e.g., the Climate Predictions and Projections program as well as various observing systems. Finally, NOAA must continue its efforts to address the COA Program work through partnerships with international observing programs, universities, agencies, and the private sector. The climate science needs are clearly larger than NOAA but NOAA should be at the core of integrating and leveraging work of partners.

This summary in no way substitutes for the specific observations and rationales developed by the CWG. I know that you will consider seriously the observations and recommendations and the NOAA SAB and its CWG look forward to your response to this report. In the meantime, the CWG continues its work as a Standing Committee.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "David Fluharty". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "F" and "D".

David Fluharty  
Wakefield Professor of Ocean and Fishery Sciences  
College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences  
School of Marine Affairs  
University of Washington  
3707 Brooklyn Ave. NE  
Seattle, WA 98105